to upgrade Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Uran Akademi, Rae Bareli at an estimated cost of Rs. 57 crores, approximately. This includes modernisation of runway, construction of additional building for hostel, hangar and office and acquisition of the adjacent Sultanpur airfield, induction of single engine and multi engine aircraft, rebuilding of helicopters. The upgradation would increase its output from 40 trainees per year to 100 trainees per year. The Government also has a proposal to set up a new flying training institute at Gondia in Maharashtra. The Government has recently enhanced the flying age of the pilots from 60 to 65 years subject to certain conditions.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. Due to limitation of resources, Government does not propose to set up flying institutes under its aegis in all parts of the country.

(e) There are 39 flying training institutes in the country. This includes three flying institutes at Andhra Pradesh namely (i) Andhra Pradesh Aviation Academy, Hyderabad, (ii) Flytech Aviation Academy, Hyderabad and (iii) Wings Aviation Pvt. Ltd., Hyderabad.

Restoration of Air Services

†3963. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have cancelled flight from New Delhi to Agra, Khujraho and Varanasi;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether there is any plan to restore the said flight keeping in view the foreign tourists visiting in this sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Due to severe resource constraints that Alliance Air was facing, it had to restructure and curtail some of its existing routes resulting in stoppage of air service between Delhi and Agra. Besides, the air traffic between Delhi and Agra mainly consists of foreign tourists and is seasonal in nature. Agra is only about 250 kilometers from Delhi and very well connected by road and rail. As such, operations with the jet type of aircraft in Indian Airlines' fleet are not comercially viable. In the case of operations on the Varanasi-Khajuraho-

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Varanasi route, it was operative upto 25.3.2006 to cater to the tourist traffic. The flights will again resume from 1st October, 2006 to cater to seasonal traffic. Indian airlines is currently operating a daily flight on Mumbai-Delhi Varanasi sector.

National Civil Aviation Grid

3964. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to set up National Civil Aviation Grid; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) No such proposal is under consideration of the Government.

Expansion of Patna Airport

†3965. SHRI MANGANI LAL MANDAL. Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that since Patna airport does not have required lenght of runway which leads to technical difficulties in landing and take-off in summer season;

(b) whether it is also a fact that having considered the possibility of increasing the length of the Patna airport, a couple of years back, the Ministry had prepared a plan which has not yet materialised; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The physical runway length at Patna airport is 7500 feet and usable length is 6400 feet due to the presence of obstacles (Trees and other obstructions) in the approach path resulting in aircraft operating with load penalty.

A proposal for changing the orientation of the present runway was explored by Airports Authority of India in November, 2000 to facilitate

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.